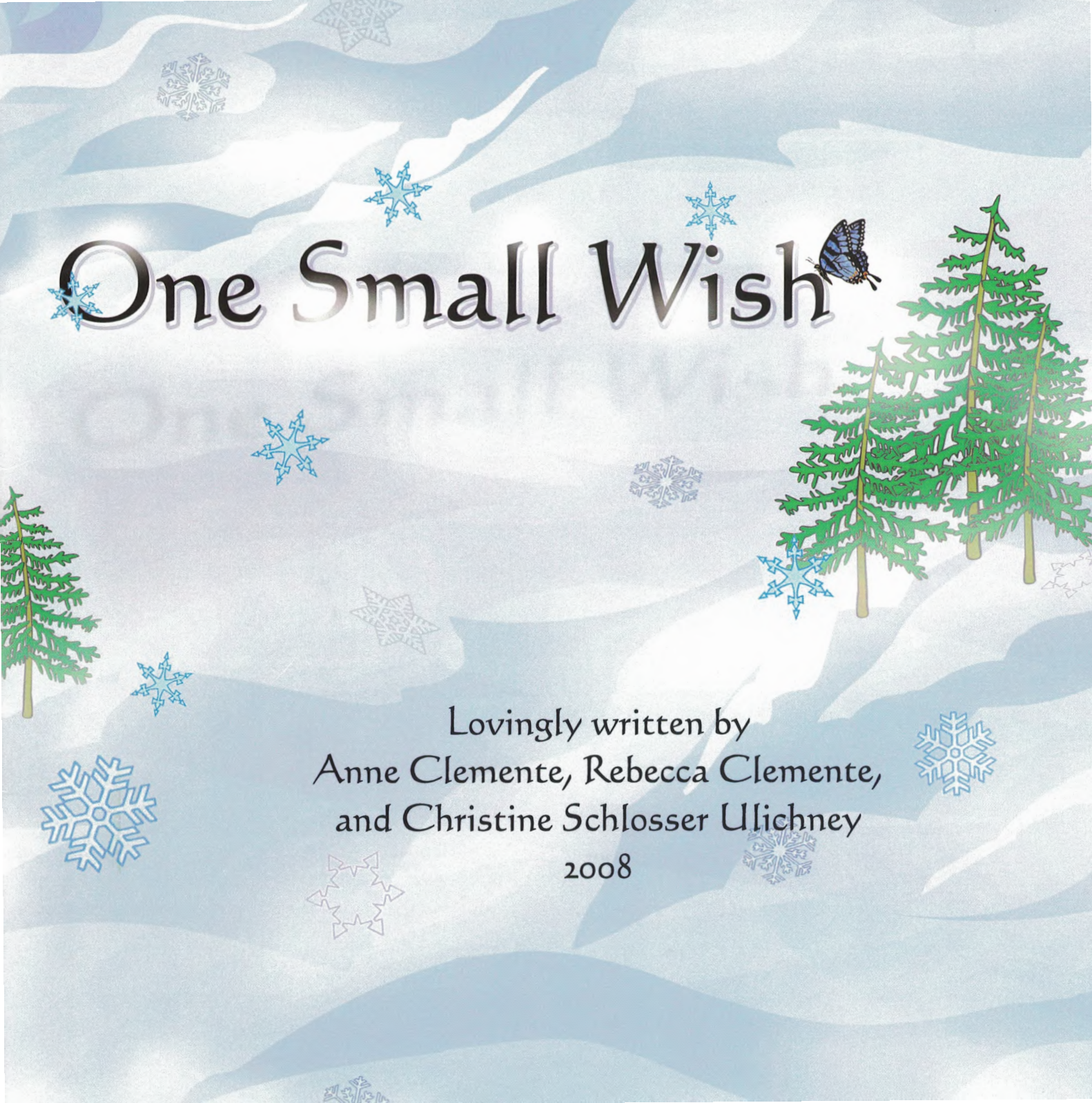
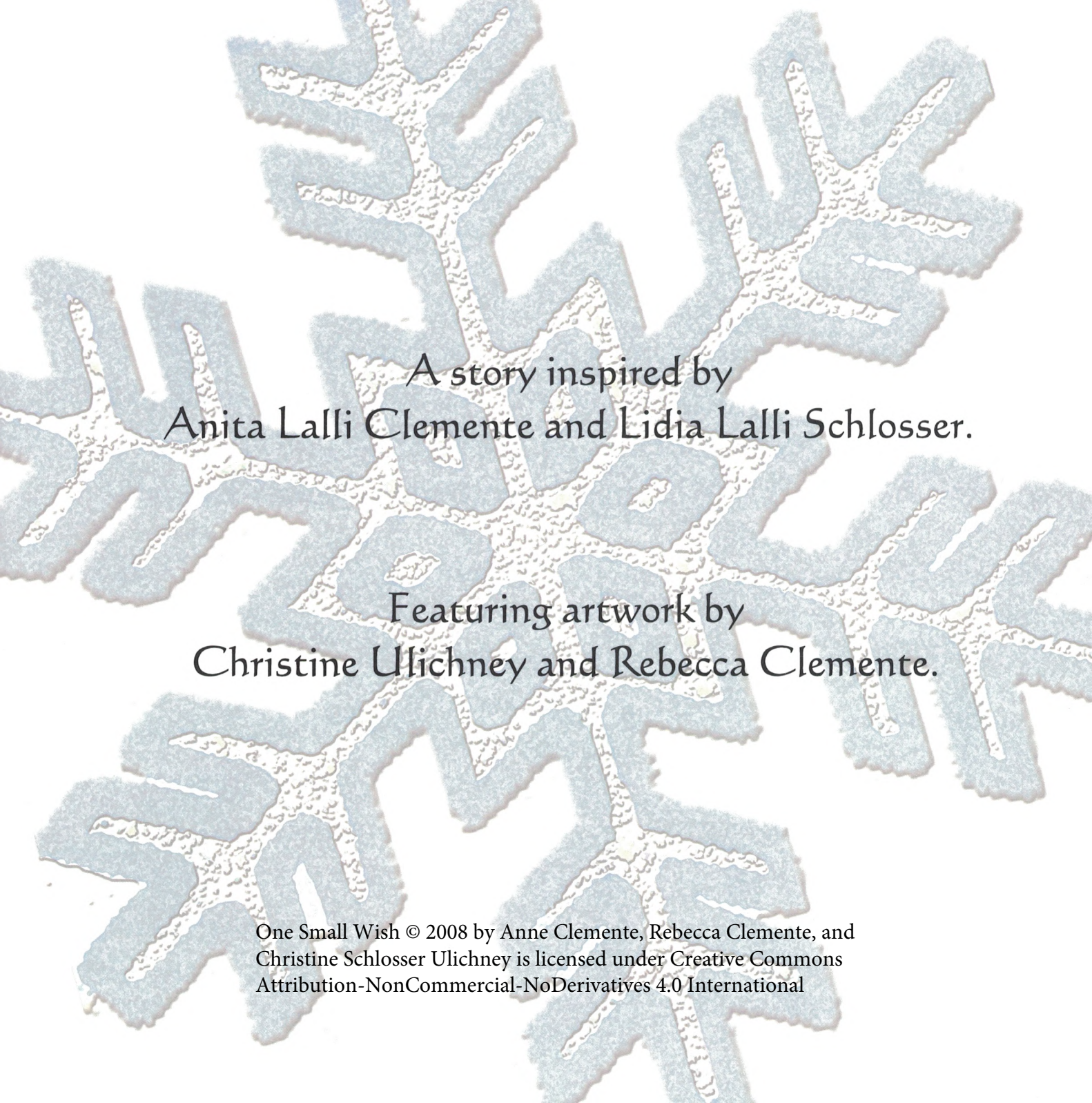




One Small Wish

Lovingly written by
Anne Clemente, Rebecca Clemente,
and Christine Schlosser Ulichney

2008



A story inspired by
Anita Lalli Clemente and Lidia Lalli Schlosser.

Featuring artwork by
Christine Ulichney and Rebecca Clemente.

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"Mama, would you send this letter to Si Pepina in the package to Carovilli? We told her about Aunt Rosie's tree."

Note: This should be Zia Pepina.

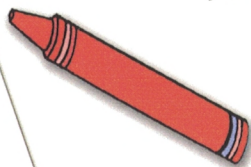
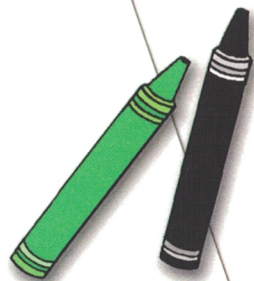
December 16, 1929

Dear Si Pepina,

Today Aunt Rosie came home with a tree. A cut pine tree!

She says it is for Christmas. She put it in a bucket of water and sand. It's in her living room! It is decorated with bulbs and garlands and shiny ornaments. Lidia and I think it is the most beautiful thing we have ever seen. See, Lidia drew you a picture.

Anita

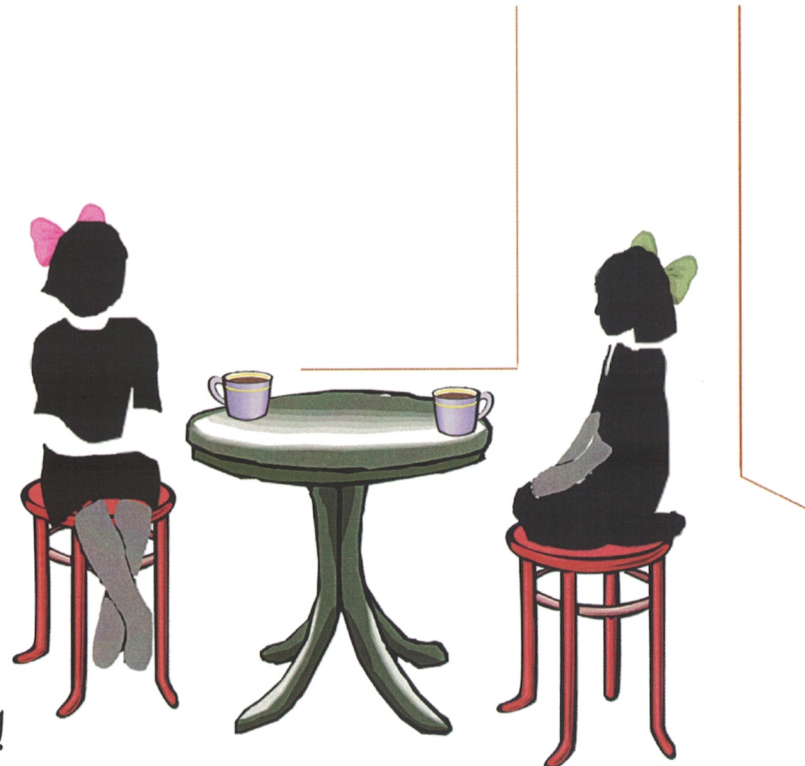


"Mama, can we have one too?"

"Nita, I will send the letter, but we cannot have a tree. There is no money for such things!" her mother said.

Since they came to America 18 months ago, Anita and Lidia lived with their parents in Aunt Rosie's attic. There was only enough money to come and join Papa who had waited for them in America.

The girls were often amazed with what they saw in their new country. But of all the things these two little girls had seen, Aunt Rosie's Christmas tree was by far the most wonderful!



"We will celebrate like we always do, on the Epiphany.
After Mass, you will see what La Bafana brings you."

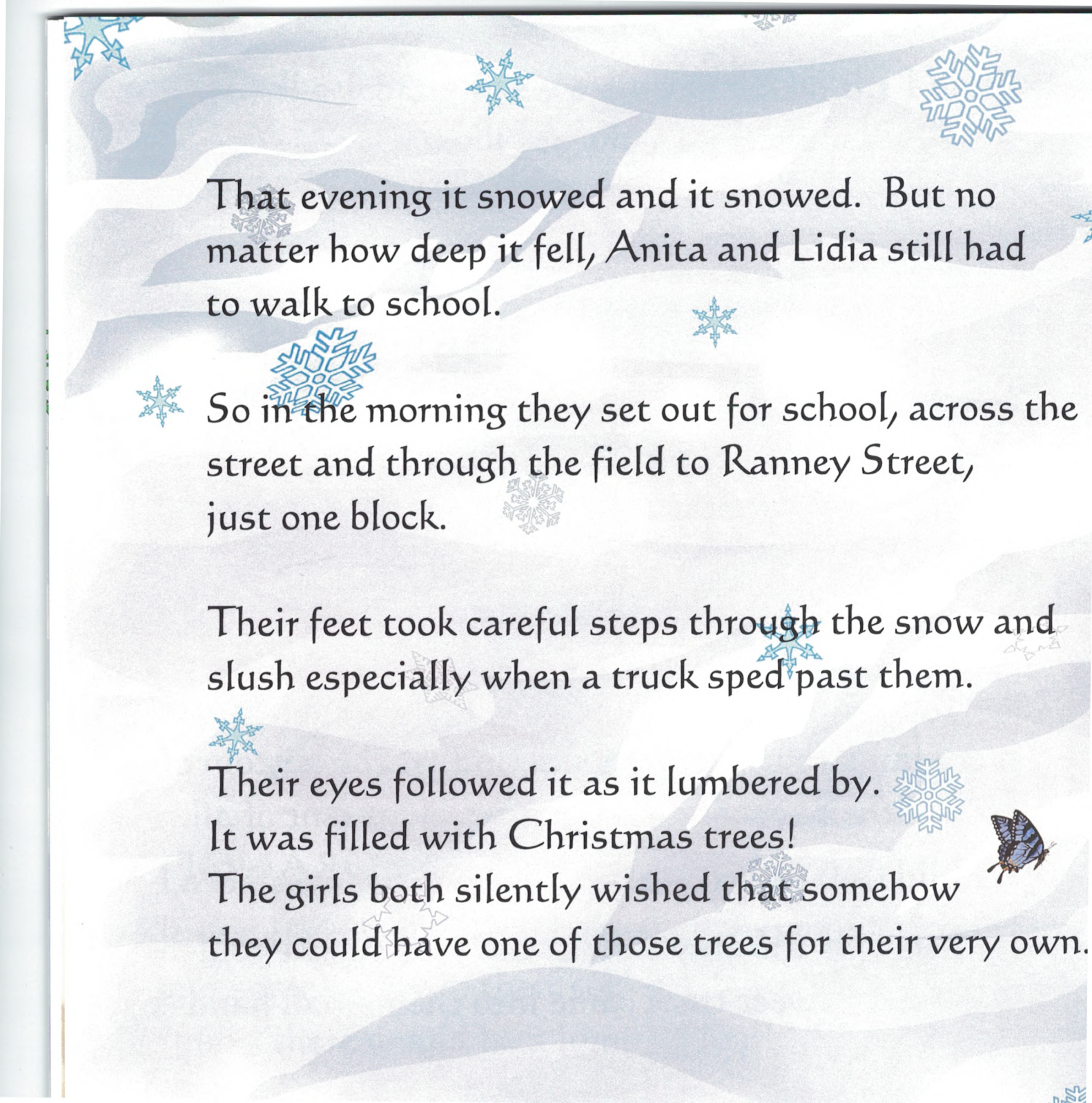
Removed an attributed illustration of autor and
illustrator Tomie dePaolo from his story "The
Legend of Old Befana".

La Bafana, not Santa Clause, came to the children in
Italy. If they were good maybe they would get mittens
and some candy in their socks.
If not, there would be a lump of coal!



But Anita and Lidia were usually good because
every January 6th they would find, at the bottom of
their socks, the most special present of all...
an ORANGE!

This was the only time of the year such a golden
sweet treat came into their small hands.



That evening it snowed and it snowed. But no matter how deep it fell, Anita and Lidia still had to walk to school.

So in the morning they set out for school, across the street and through the field to Ranney Street, just one block.

Their feet took careful steps through the snow and slush especially when a truck sped past them.

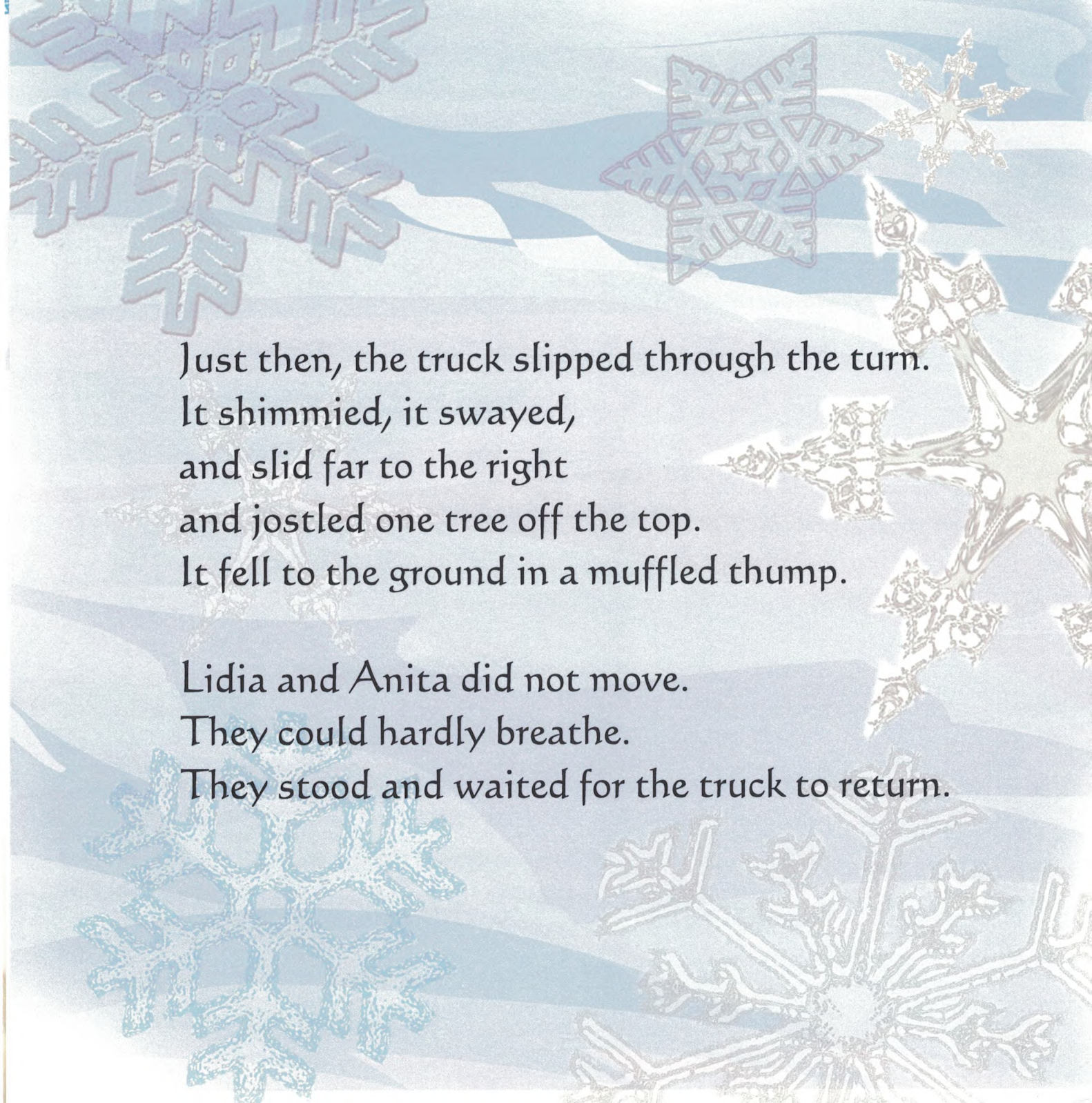
Their eyes followed it as it lumbered by.

It was filled with Christmas trees!

The girls both silently wished that somehow they could have one of those trees for their very own.







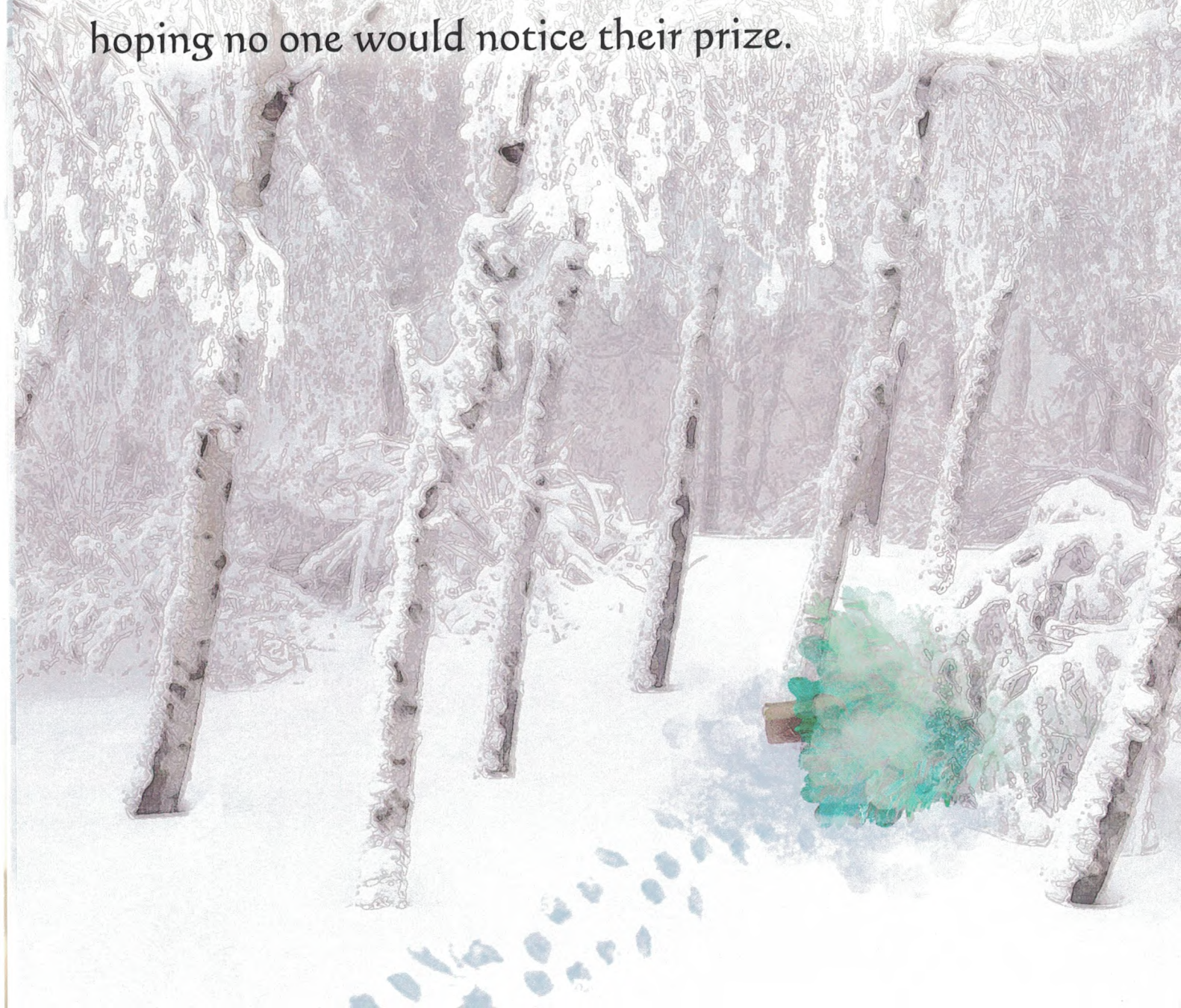
Just then, the truck slipped through the turn.
It shimmied, it swayed,
and slid far to the right
and jostled one tree off the top.
It fell to the ground in a muffled thump.

Lidia and Anita did not move.
They could hardly breathe.
They stood and waited for the truck to return.



But it skidded on,
not knowing that it just made a wish come true.

Excitedly they grabbed the tree by its short rough trunk and dragged it off the slushy road. They hid it behind some bushes and covered it with a flurry of snow, hoping no one would notice their prize.

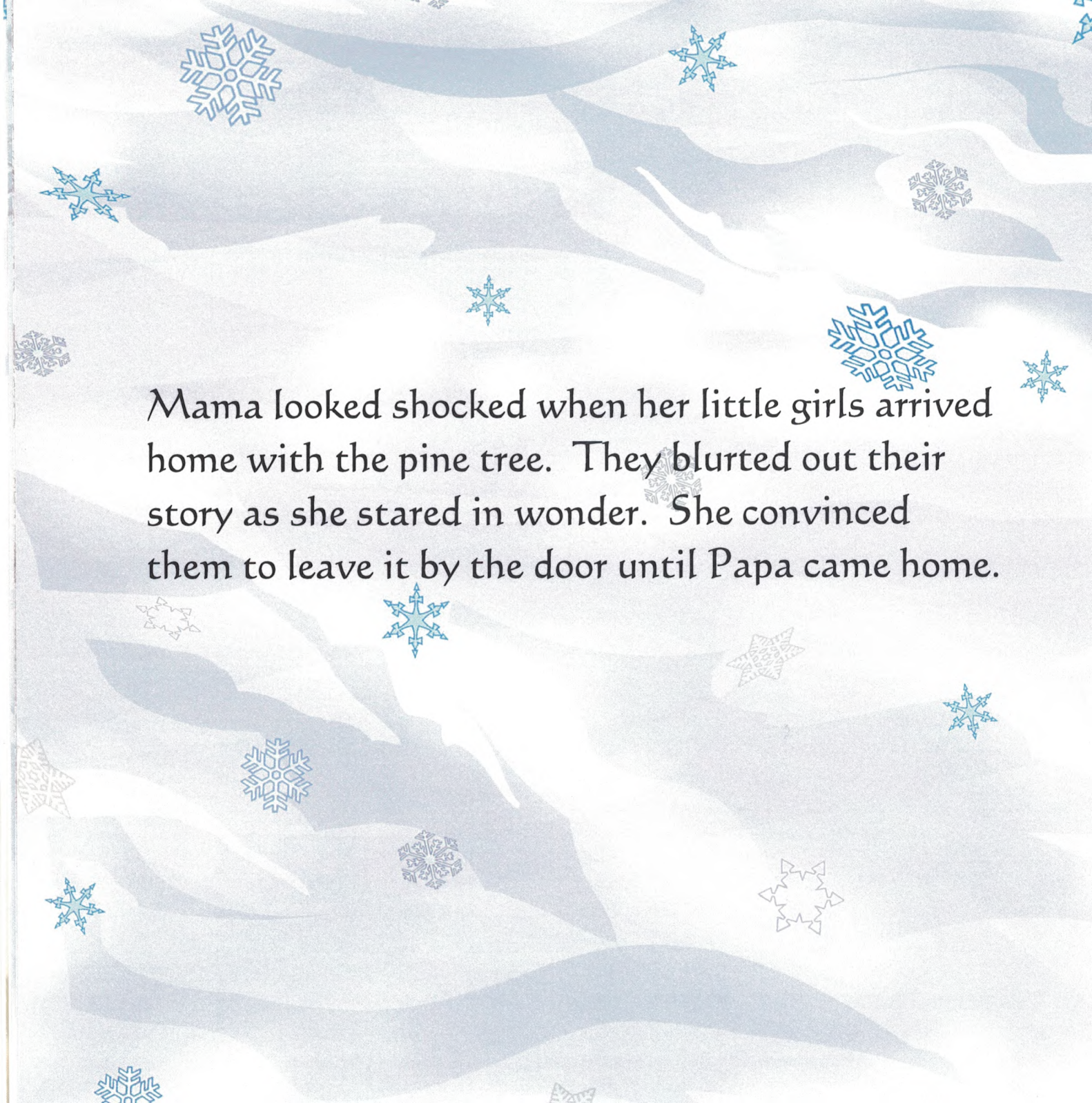


There never was a longer day! It was hard to think about learning more English and numbers.

When the bell rang at 3:00 o'clock, Anita and Lidia dashed up the street, anxious to see if the tree was still there.

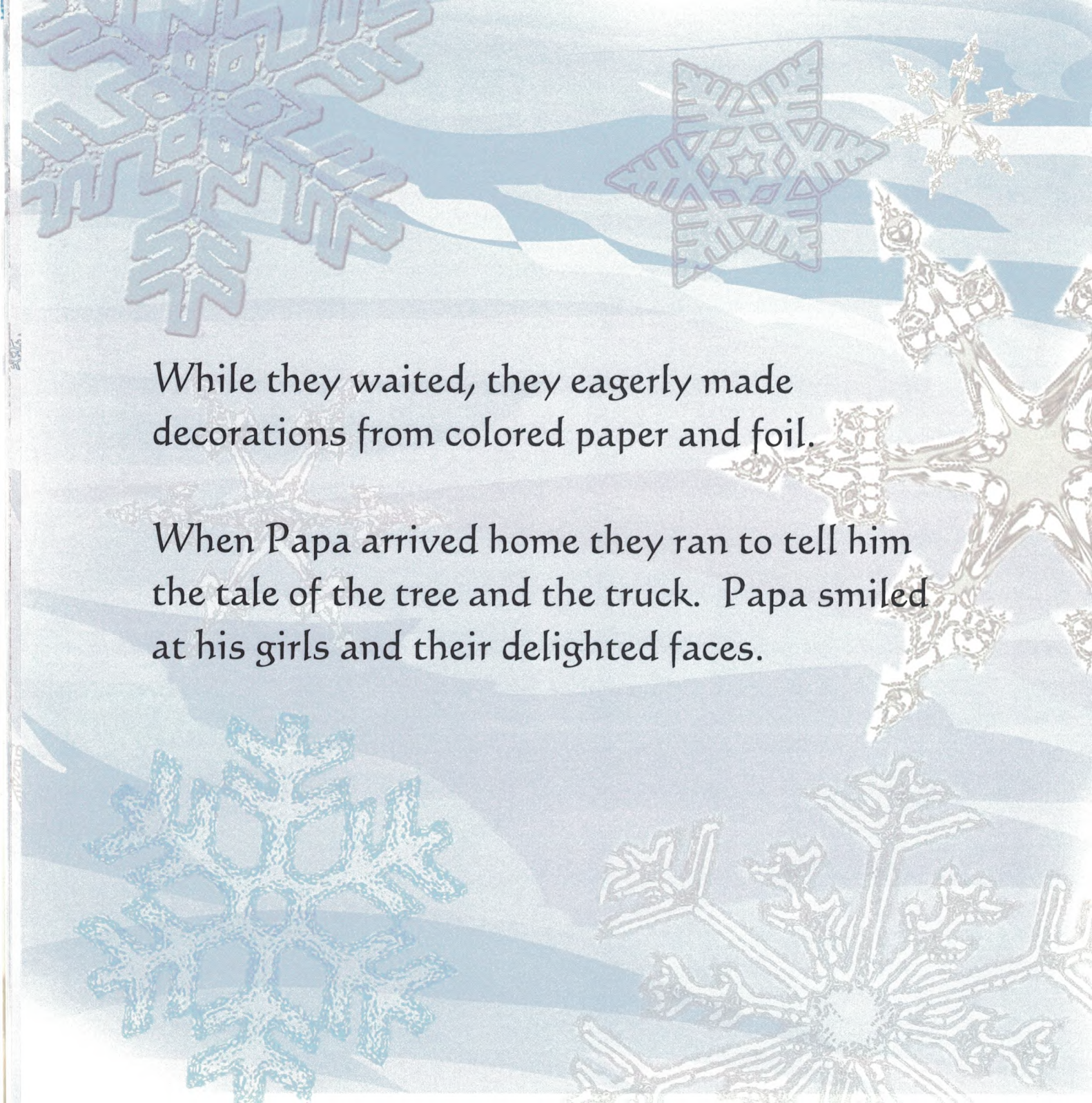
It was!
Delighted they grabbed the bottom branches
of the tree and dragged it home.
This was hard work for two small girls!





Mama looked shocked when her little girls arrived home with the pine tree. They blurted out their story as she stared in wonder. She convinced them to leave it by the door until Papa came home.

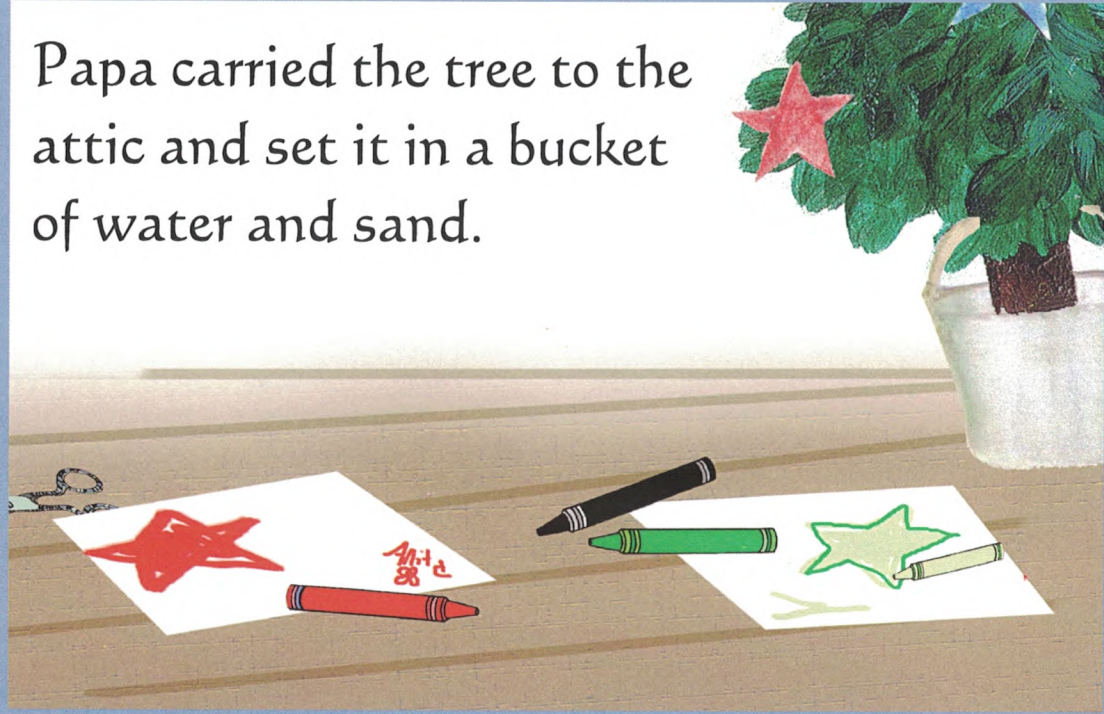




While they waited, they eagerly made decorations from colored paper and foil.

When Papa arrived home they ran to tell him the tale of the tree and the truck. Papa smiled at his girls and their delighted faces.

Papa carried the tree to the attic and set it in a bucket of water and sand.



Anita and Lidia placed their ornaments on the tree.

While the decorations were homemade and simple...

...this was the best Christmas tree ever!

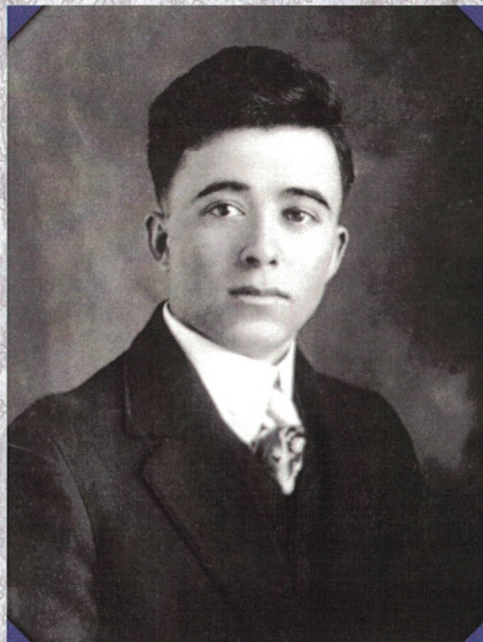
It continued to snow that evening. As they watched the snow get deeper and deeper, Anita and Lidia would catch themselves admiring the tree. Each time they would giggle with delight. What a lucky day! Who would have believed that a walk to school, a snowy day, and a passing truck, created the Christmas magic to make the one small wish of two little girls come true?



One Small Wish

Anita (left) and Lidia (right)





Luigi Lalli,
25 years old
1919



Maria Lalli
23 years old
1919



Maria, Lidia
and Anita Lalli
1925

Buon Natale





DragonFeather Design
www.DragonFeatherDesign.com

Resources to create your own family story
<https://onesmallwish.weebly.com>

Enjoy a few more pictures of people in the story. As you do this think about the pictures you have as you write one of your family stories.



Zia Peppina (Giuseppina Nuosci) and Salvatore Testa on their wedding day, 1925, Carovilli, Italy.

The word “Zia” means aunt in the Italian.



Anita Lalli and Lidia Lalli, 1936, Akron, Ohio.



Luigi and Maria Lalli,
1969 celebrating their 50th
wedding anniversary,
Akron, Ohio.



Anita Lalli Clemente, Fred Lalli, and Lidia Lalli Schlosser, 2017, Granville, Ohio.

As of this writing, April 2, 2020, Anita is 98 years-old and Lidia is 96 years-old.

The Authors



Anne Clemente and Rebecca Clemente, 1986

Christine Schlosser Ulichney, 2019



The book graphic designer: Dragon Feather Design
www.dragonfeatherdesign.com

To discover more about the tale of La Befana you can read Tomie dePaola's book *The Legend of Old Befana* (1980). You can also find these on the internet
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CQeBQOvXcQk> and <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Befana>